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AUTHOR Light, Paul, Ed.; Butterworth, George
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ABSTRACT

This collection of essays illustrates various aspects of the recent trend to situate accounts of cognitive development. The essays examine contextual sensitivity in relation to ecological theories of perception and cognition, and contrast intuitive reasoning in mathematical and other scientific domains with the child's difficulty with reasoning in formal context, such as the school. A central concern of the collection is the generalizability of knowledge and its transfer from one context to another. Following an introductory chapter (George Butterworth), chapter 2 (Antonio Roazzi and Peter Bryant) examines how the context in which cognitive problems are given to young children has different implications for different social groups. Chapters 3 (Neil Mercer) focuses on the definitions of "context" and "culture" in relation to situated learning. Chapters 4 (Analucia Dias Schliemann and David William Carraner) and 5 (Jean Lave) examine how particular knowledge, such as propositional reasoning and word problems, may function in a situationally constrained fashion. Chapter 6 (Jacquelyn Baker-Sennett and others) explores the sociocultural processes of creative planning through the process of children's collaborative creation of a play. Chapter 7 (Giyoo Hatano and Kayoko Inagaki) examines the context-bound nature of our knowledge and competence, and its possible change in the course of acquiring expertise. Chapter 8 (Vittorio Girotto and Paul Light) explores the pragmatic base of children's reasoning. Finally, chapter 9 (Jacqueline J. Goodnow and Pamela Warton) suggests overcoming the limitation of conventional accounts of context and cognition by adopting a pluralist view. (AA)